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(54) **A method of producing a resistance element for a resistance thermometer.**

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US-A-3 845 443
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Description

The present invention is concerned with a method of producing a resistance element for a resistance thermometer, particularly of the form comprising a thin layer of platinum metal on an insulating substrate. It is known to produce both so-called thin and thick film devices comprising layers of conductive material on insulating substrates. In thick film devices, the conducting layer is typically formed of metal particles bound together in glass. In thin film devices the conducting layer is usually pure metal. Both thick and thin film processes have been proposed for forming resistance thermometer elements. The present invention is concerned only with thin film devices.

Thin film resistance thermometer elements have been proposed and one suggested method of manufacturing such elements is by depositing the thin metallic film on the substrate by sputtering. Great difficulty has, however, been experienced in forming such a sputtered thin film device with a temperature coefficient of resistance comparable to that of the bulk metal used in the sputtering process. For example, when sputtering platinum it has proved extremely difficult to achieve a temperature coefficient of resistance (TCR) anywhere approaching the desired standard of $3.85 \times 10^{-3}/^{\circ}\text{C}$ (3850 ppm/ $^{\circ}\text{C}$). This is in spite of the fact that 99.99% pure platinum in bulk form has a temperature coefficient of resistance of $3.93 \times 10^{-3}/^{\circ}\text{C}$ (3930 ppm/ $^{\circ}\text{C}$).

On the other hand, a thin film resistance thermometer would present very great advantages if it could be manufactured reproducibly with a desirable temperature coefficient of resistance. The amount of platinum metal used in the device could be considerably lower than sensor elements used hitherto and the device could be made very small and manufactured relatively cheaply. Furthermore, trimming of such thin film devices to a standard ice point resistance is much facilitated.

There has, thus, over the years been considerable research effort put in to overcoming the problems of forming such a thin film resistance element with the desired temperature characteristics.

The background of sputtering platinum films is represented by the article "Structural and Electrical properties of films sputtered from a Pt cathode in argon-oxygen mixtures" by Bennewitz and Westwood in Journal of Applied Physics, Vol. 46, No. 2, February 1975. This article discloses reactive dc sputtering of platinum in argon-oxygen mixtures. The resultant films have TCR values ranging from $+2.00$ to $-25.00 \times 10^{-3}/^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($+2000$ to -25000 ppm/ $^{\circ}\text{C}$) and comprise mixtures of platinum and oxides of platinum. Further, U.S. Patent No. 3845443 describes making a thin film platinum resistance thermometer element by sputtering in pure argon, but does not indicate that TCR values about $3.85 \times 10^{-3}/^{\circ}\text{C}$ (3850 ppm/ $^{\circ}\text{C}$) are obtained.

It is believed that sputtering in an atmosphere

containing oxygen is desirable in reducing the degree of contamination of the resulting platinum film. However, oxygen has a low sputtering yield and so the presence of a higher sputtering yield gas has been thought necessary in prior art processes to provide the relatively high atomic weight ions necessary for the sputtering process.

There are only two proposals in the prior art known to the applicants for resolving the problem of making a sputtered thin film platinum resistance thermometer element with a TCR about $3.85 \times 10^{-3}/^{\circ}\text{C}$ (3850 ppm/ $^{\circ}\text{C}$). FR—A—2301902 discloses R.F. sputtering of platinum film in an argon-oxygen atmosphere on to an insulating substrate having a higher coefficient of thermal expansion than platinum between 0 and 1000°C . On the other hand, United States Patent U.S. 4072593 discloses sputtering the thin platinum film in an atmosphere consisting essentially of krypton-oxygen or xenon-oxygen. U.S. 4072593 acknowledges the disadvantage of using a substrate material having a greater coefficient of thermal expansion than platinum, and also the shortcomings of sputtering in argon and argon-oxygen. The proposal of U.S. 4072593 has the serious drawback that krypton and xenon are very expensive.

According to the present invention there is provided a method of producing a platinum resistance thermometer element with a temperature coefficient of resistance (TCR) of about $3.85 \times 10^{-3}/^{\circ}\text{C}$, comprising sputtering a platinum film onto an insulating substrate by the process of magnetron sputtering, wherein the magnetron is arranged to confine electrons to drift in a closed path perpendicular to an electric field, and using a gaseous atmosphere containing at least 10% oxygen by volume, any balance gas providing no, or less than 10% by volume of, krypton or xenon in the atmosphere.

The method of the present invention employs a particular form of magnetron sputtering with which it has been found possible to dispense with using substantial proportions of gas of relatively high atomic weight to afford a high sputtering yield.

The efficiency of the particular form of magnetron sputtering is very much greater than the commonly used linear sputtering technique, because with such magnetron sputtering, the electrons are forced to circulate for much longer in the useful plasma region thereby greatly increasing the number of collisions with gas atoms and producing correspondingly more ions. In fact, relatively fast sputtering rates can be achieved with the method of this invention even in an atmosphere of pure oxygen, this enabling the possibility of contamination of the platinum film to be greatly reduced.

The atmosphere is desirably at least 20%, and conveniently at least 50%, by volume of oxygen with the balance of gas which is inert to platinum.

One of the problems with depositing films by sputtering is that it appears molecules of gases present in the sputtering atmosphere can be

entrapped in the metal condensed on to the substrate and considerably influence the electrical properties of the resulting film. This is especially critical when forming a resistance thermometer element since the entrapment of many gases which would appear otherwise to be inert seems to reduce considerably the temperature coefficient of resistance of the resulting film. With a pure oxygen atmosphere, although some oxygen entrapment may occur, and indeed the formation of a platinum oxide in the deposited film, the entrapped oxygen may be removed and the oxide reduced or dissociated by heat treating the film after sputtering. It is well-known for platinum that while forming oxides the reduction of these oxides is easy to perform.

Lower concentrations of oxygen in the gaseous atmosphere are also useful. The atmosphere may be about 20% by volume of oxygen with the balance consisting primarily of nitrogen. In fact an atmosphere of air has provided good results.

In all cases, the gaseous atmosphere is preferably dry, such that the partial pressure of hydrogen (from the system of water vapour dissociation) in the glow discharge is insufficient to cause reduction of the growing oxide film. However, it is not essential to exclude all water vapour.

Normally, after the sputtering process, the thin platinum film is heat treated at between 700°C and 1200°C for at least five hours. This annealing, or tempering, process both allows the deposited film to flow properly together as a homogenous metal layer and also ensures removal of any entrapped oxygen and reduction of any oxides. The heat treating may be carried out for about 20 hours.

After the heat treating process mentioned above, the platinum layer may be scribed with a laser to form an extended path thereof. This is normally desirable to provide an element with the required ice point resistance, typically 100 ohms. Other methods of producing the path may also be employed, such as photo-etching.

After laser scribing, a further heat treatment may be provided again at temperatures between 700°C and 1200°C and for at least one hour. The laser scribing operation is found to somewhat impair the temperature coefficient of the film and this second heat treatment reduces this effect.

It is desirable to use in the sputtering process a sputtering target made of 99.99% pure platinum.

The pressure of the gaseous atmosphere may be between 1.33×10^{-6} and 1.33×10^{-5} bar (10^{-3} Torr and 10^{-2} Torr), and preferably between 5.32×10^{-6} and 7.98×10^{-6} bar (4×10^{-3} and 6×10^{-3} Torr), or alternatively between 7.98×10^{-6} bar (6×10^{-3} and 9×10^{-3} Torr).

Useful results may also be obtained at higher pressures between 1.33×10^{-5} and 1.33×10^{-4} bar (10^{-2} Torr and 10^{-1} Torr).

Preferably, the magnetron used is a planar magnetron, and the closed path is generally circular.

Examples of the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a schematic illustration of apparatus for carrying out an example of the method of the present invention;

Figure 2 is a detailed cross-sectional view of the magnetron cathode of the apparatus of Figure 1; and

Figure 3 is a schematic illustration of the platinum target used in the magnetron of Figure 2.

Referring to Figure 1, platinum sputtering is carried out in a vacuum vessel 10 which is pumped out to a low pressure through a vacuum pipe 11 by a vacuum pump (not shown).

The vacuum chamber 10 contains a gaseous atmosphere at low pressure, typically between 5.32×10^{-6} and 7.98×10^{-6} bar (4×10^{-3} and 6×10^{-3} Torr) comprising substantially pure oxygen supplied via a feed pipe from an oxygen cylinder 13. The oxygen may be chilled in a chiller 14 prior to delivery to the vacuum chamber 10 to remove any water. The pressure of the gas in the vacuum chamber 10 may be monitored by a pressure gauge 15.

In the chamber 10, the sputtering process is carried out by means of a magnetron 17 arranged as a cathode and an anode 18. In the described example, a DC voltage from a power supply 19 is supplied to the cathode relative to earth and the anode 18 is itself earthed.

As will be explained in more detail later, the voltage between the cathode and anode sets up a glow discharge adjacent the cathode resulting in the formation of positive ions of the gaseous atmosphere which are attracted to the cathode. A platinum target is provided at the cathode which is thus bombarded by the positive ions which sputter off platinum metal from the target. A substrate to be coated with the platinum metal can then be located, preferably adjacent the anode 18, such that the sputtered platinum metal condenses on the surface of the substrate forming a metal film coating thereon.

Sputtering processes generally are well-established in the art. However, with typical sputtering techniques it has been normal practice to include in the gaseous atmosphere a substantial proportion of gas of relatively high atomic weight which affords a high sputtering yield (i.e. atoms sputtered per ion impact). However, with magnetron sputtering as in the method of this invention, relatively high rate sputtering can be achieved using even pure oxygen as the atmosphere.

Figure 2 illustrates the magnetron cathode 17 in cross-section. The magnetron assembly is mounted on a pedestal indicated generally at 20 screwed into the base 21 of the vacuum chamber 10. The pedestal comprises a metal outer sheath 22 which makes electrical contact with the base 21 and is earthed. A tubular copper electrode body 23 extends up through the metal sheath 22 of the pedestal 20 and is insulated from the sheath 22 by

means of insulators 24 and 25. The copper electrode body 23 supports at its upper end a platform 26 on which are mounted an annular array of magnets 27. A target plate 28 of platinum is mounted on top of the magnets 27. The target plate 28 may comprise a circular disc of platinum metal as illustrated in Figure 3. The magnets 27 are arranged to produce closed loops of magnetic field in radial planes extending above the target plate 28 as illustrated at 29 in Figures 2 and 3. Instead of several magnets 27 a single annular magnetic core may be provided having concentric north and south poles. In the present example permanent magnets are used, however, instead, electro-magnets may be employed.

The metallic sheath 22 extends radially outwardly underneath the platform 26 and then upwardly in a skirt 30 to a position just spaced from the outer peripheral edge of the target plate 28.

In one operation, when a voltage is applied to the copper electrode body 23 and the chamber 10 contains a suitable gas at a low pressure, a glow discharge is formed between the plate 28 forming a cathode and the anode 18.

In the absence of the magnets 27, electrons emitted from the cathode 28 are drawn directly across towards the anode 18. If very low gas pressures are used in the chamber 10, then electrons may traverse to the anode without experiencing a single collision with a gas atom, so that the production rate of positive ions is relatively low. Any positive ions produced are attracted to the cathode 28 where they bombard the cathode to sputter off platinum material which can then be deposited or condensed on to a suitably positioned substrate.

However, in the example of the present invention, electrons within the influence of the magnetic field from the magnets 27 are influenced by this field and are effectively trapped inside closed field lines 29. The trapped electrons tend to drift perpendicular to the plane of the magnetic field lines. Since, as can best be seen in Figure 3, the magnets 27 are arranged to provide a closed annulus of the magnetic field lines above the target plate 28, the drifting electrons are constrained to circulate around the closed path 31. With such an arrangement, even with relatively low gas pressures in the chamber 10, electrons continue circulating until they experience one or more collisions with gas atoms. In this way the available electrons are employed much more efficiently and a much higher proportion of gas ions are produced thereby greatly increasing the rate of sputtering and the resultant rate of deposition of material on the substrate.

As shown best in Figure 3, the anode 18 is connected to earth and is located substantially on the axis of symmetry of the target plate 28. The substrate to be coated is preferably located immediately adjacent the anode 18 as at 32. In other arrangements the anode need not be earthed, i.e. if it is biased relative to earth.

Since the electrons are constrained to circulate

within the loops of magnetic field 29, the glow discharge is produced in a corresponding annulus and the resulting positive ions are attracted to impinge on the underlying surface portion of the target plate 28. The annular surface region thus defined is known as the area of erosion and during the sputtering process, platinum is sputtered off from this area and can condense on the substrate 32.

An important feature of the present invention is that satisfactory sputtering rates can be achieved without the addition of high atomic weight inert gases in the gaseous atmosphere. Thus, relatively high proportions of oxygen in the gaseous mixture can be employed and any balance of gas in the atmosphere can be a suitably platinum-inert gas of relatively low atomic weight. In particular, the present invention does not necessarily require the use of krypton or xenon as balance gases.

Indeed, in a preferred example of the invention, a substantially pure oxygen atmosphere is employed and very satisfactory sputtering efficiency and resultant deposition rate are achieved.

The use of oxygen in the atmosphere improves the quality of the film deposited on the substrate. A proportion of the metal sputtered from the platinum target in an oxygen atmosphere is believed to be in oxide form and the combination of oxide deposition together with entrapped oxygen at the substrate provides an improved quality of deposited film. With a pure oxygen atmosphere, problems associated with entrapment of any balance gases in the atmosphere are substantially obviated.

It is most desirable to use 99.99% pure platinum for the target plate 28.

In a particular example of the invention, a substrate of aluminium oxide was coated with platinum in the apparatus of Figure 1. A negative voltage of 800 V was applied to the cathode 17 and the chamber 10 contained pure dry oxygen at a pressure of 6.65×10^{-6} bar (5×10^{-3} Torr). A current of 240 mA was caused to flow through the cathode at a power of about 192 W forming an annular glow discharge above the surface of the platinum target plate 29. Platinum was deposited on the substrate at a rate of $900 \text{ nm} \cdot 10^{-1}$ (900 Å) per minute to a depth of $20000 \text{ nm} \cdot 10^{-1}$ (20,000 Å).

After sputtering, the coated device was heat treated at a temperature of 1000°C for ten hours. The device was then scribed with a laser to form an elongate path of the platinum film to provide the necessary ice point resistance of the device. After laser scribing, the device was again heat treated at 1000°C for 2½ hours.

The resultant device was found to have a sheet resistivity of $53 \pm 3 \text{ m}\Omega$ per square and a temperature coefficient of resistance of $3.841 \times 10^{-3}/^\circ\text{C}$ ($3841 \pm 1 \text{ ppm}/^\circ\text{C}$). The adhesion of the film to the substrate was found to be good.

Although in the above described example, a planar circular magnetron was used in DC mode, other forms of magnetron may be employed in

the method of the present invention. The purpose of the magnetron arrangement is to deflect the electrons repelled by the cathode into substantially closed paths to improve the efficiency of forming positive ions from the available gas atmosphere. The magnetron surface may be curved and the track or closed path in which the electrons are confined may be any regular or irregular shape. Also, radio frequency voltages may be applied to the magnetron in such a way as to induce a negative bias on at least one of the electrodes (if more than one) providing the closed electron path.

A further advantage of the use of a magnetron as described is also that relatively low anode/cathode voltages are required because the plasma or glow discharge is formed only immediately adjacent the target plate at the cathode.

Although the above example uses dry oxygen in the gaseous atmosphere, some water vapour may be included, provided the quantity present is insufficient for the partial pressure of hydrogen in the glow discharge to cause reduction of the growing oxide film. In the examples described, the gas is dried by liquid nitrogen when fed into the chamber 10, and by "cold fingers" in the chamber which are also cooled with liquid nitrogen.

In another example, the chamber 10 contained dry air at 9.975×10^{-6} bar (7.5×10^{-3} Torr). A negative voltage of 460 v was applied to the cathode 17 and a current of 200 mA was caused to flow through the cathode at a power of about 92 Watts. Platinum was deposited on the substrate at a rate of $650 \text{ nm} \cdot 10^{-1}$ ($650 \text{ \AA}$) per minute to a depth of about $20000 \text{ nm} \cdot 10^{-1}$ ($20,000 \text{ \AA}$).

The coated device was then heat treated and scribed as before. Eighteen resulting devices were formed in this manner and found to have a sheet resistivity of 55 m Ω per square and α -values of about $3.85 \times 10^{-3}/^\circ\text{C}$ ($3850 \pm 4 \text{ ppm}/^\circ\text{C}$).

Further experiments showed that these results could be obtained with less consistency, at much higher pressures, say, up to 1.33×10^{-4} bar (10^{-1} Torr). Such higher pressures greatly simplify the process, requiring a less sophisticated vacuum system.

Claims

1. A method of producing a platinum resistance thermometer element with a temperature coefficient of resistance (TCR) of about $3.85 \times 10^{-3}/^\circ\text{C}$, comprising sputtering a platinum film onto an insulating substrate by the process of magnetron sputtering, wherein the magnetron is arranged to confine electrons to drift in a closed path perpendicular to an electric field, and using a gaseous atmosphere containing at least 10% oxygen by volume, any balance gas providing no, or less than 10% by volume of, krypton or xenon in the atmosphere.

2. A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the platinum film is heat treated at between 700°C and 1200°C .

3. A method as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the platinum film is heat treated for at least 5 hours.

4. A method as claimed in Claim 3, wherein the platinum film is heat treated for about 20 hours.

5. A method as claimed in any one of Claims 2 to 4 including the further step, after said heat treating, of scribing the platinum film with a laser to form an extended path thereof.

6. A method as claimed in Claim 5, including the further step, after said laser scribing, of further heat treating the scribed platinum film at between 700°C and 1200°C for at least 1 hour.

7. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said gaseous atmosphere is pure oxygen.

8. A method as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 6, wherein said gaseous atmosphere is at least 20% by volume of oxygen with the balance of gas which is inert to platinum.

9. A method as claimed in Claim 8, wherein said gaseous atmosphere is at least 50% by volume of oxygen.

10. A method as claimed in Claim 8, wherein said balance of gas consists primarily of nitrogen.

11. A method as claimed in Claim 10, wherein said gaseous atmosphere is air.

12. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the sputtering target used is 99.99% pure platinum.

13. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the pressure of said gaseous atmosphere is between 1.33×10^{-6} and 1.33×10^{-5} bar (10^{-3} Torr and 10^{-2} Torr).

14. A method as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 12, wherein the pressure of said gaseous atmosphere is between 1.33×10^{-5} and 1.33×10^{-4} (10^{-2} Torr and 10^{-1} Torr).

15. A method as claimed in Claim 13, wherein the pressure is between 5.32 and 7.98×10^{-6} bar (4×10^{-3} Torr and 6×10^{-3} Torr).

16. A method as claimed in Claim 13, wherein the pressure is between 7.98 and 11.97×10^{-6} bar (6×10^{-3} Torr and 9×10^{-3} Torr).

17. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the magnetron used is a planar magnetron.

18. A method as claimed in Claim 17, wherein said closed path is generally circular.

Patentansprüche

1. Verfahren zur Herstellung eines Platin-Widerstandsthermometerelements mit einem Temperaturkoeffizienten des Widerstandes (TCR) von etwa $3,85 \times 10^{-3}/^\circ\text{C}$, nach welchem ein Platinfilm nach dem Verfahren der Magnetronzerstäubung auf eine isolierende Unterlage aufgebracht wird, wobei das Magnetron so angeordnet ist, daß es die Bewegung der Elektronen auf einen geschlossenen Weg senkrecht zu einem elektrischen Feld begrenzt, und nach welchem eine Gasatmosphäre verwendet wird, die mindestens 10 Vol.-% Sauerstoff enthält, wobei ein eventuelles Restgas kein oder weniger als 10 Vol.-% Krypton oder Xenon in der Atmosphäre enthält.

2. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, worin der Platinfilm bei Temperaturen zwischen 700°C und 1200°C hitzebehandelt wird.

3. Verfahren nach Anspruch 2, worin der Platinfilm mindestens 5 Stunden hitzebehandelt wird.

4. Verfahren nach Anspruch 3, worin der Platinfilm etwa 20 Stunden hitzebehandelt wird.

5. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 2 bis 4, worin in einer weiteren Stufe nach der Hitzebehandlung der Platinfilm mit einem Laser geritzt wird, um seine Weglänge vergrößern.

6. Verfahren nach Anspruch 5, worin in einem weiteren Schritt nach dem Ritzen mit dem Laser der geritzte Platinfilm bei Temperaturen zwischen 700°C und 1200°C mindestens eine Stunde hitzebehandelt wird.

7. Verfahren nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, worin die Gasatmosphäre reiner Sauerstoff ist.

8. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6, worin die Gasatmosphäre mindestens 20 Vol.-% Sauerstoff enthält, wobei der Rest des Gases gegenüber Platin inert ist.

9. Verfahren nach Anspruch 8, worin die Gasatmosphäre mindestens 50 Vol.-% Sauerstoff enthält.

10. Verfahren nach Anspruch 8, worin der Rest des Gases hauptsächlich aus Stickstoff besteht.

11. Verfahren nach Anspruch 10, worin die Gasatmosphäre Luft ist.

12. Verfahren nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, worin das verwendete Zerstäubungstarget Platin mit einer Reinheit von 99,99 % ist.

13. Verfahren nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, worin der Druck der Gasatmosphäre zwischen $1,33 \times 10^{-6}$ und $1,33 \times 10^{-5}$ bar (10^{-3} bis 10^{-2} Torr) liegt.

14. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 12, worin der Druck der Gasatmosphäre zwischen $1,33 \times 10^{-5}$ und $1,33 \times 10^{-4}$ bar (10^{-2} bis 10^{-1} Torr) liegt.

15. Verfahren nach Anspruch 13, worin der Druck zwischen $5,32$ und $7,98 \times 10^{-6}$ bar (4×10^{-3} bis 6×10^{-3} Torr) liegt.

16. Verfahren nach Anspruch 13, worin der Druck zwischen $7,98$ und $11,97 \times 10^{-6}$ bar (6×10^{-3} bis 9×10^{-3} Torr) liegt.

17. Verfahren nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, worin das verwendete Magnetron ein planares Magnetron ist.

18. Verfahren nach Anspruch 17, worin der geschlossene Weg im allgemeinen kreisförmig ist.

Revendications

1. Procédé de fabrication d'un élément de thermomètre à résistance au platine avec un coefficient de température de résistance (CTR) d'environ $3,85 \times 10^{-3}/^{\circ}\text{C}$, comportant la pulvérisation d'une pellicule de platine sur un substrat isolant par le procédé de pulvérisation par magnétron, dans lequel le magnétron est conçu pour contraindre les électrons à se déplacer suivant un

trajet fermé perpendiculaire à un champ électrique, et utilisant une atmosphère gazeuse contenant au moins 10 % d'oxygène en volume, tout gaz complémentaire n'introduisant pas, ou introduisant moins de 10 % en volume, de krypton ou de xénon dans cette atmosphère.

2. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la pellicule de platine est traitée thermiquement à une température de 700°C à 1200°C.

3. Procédé selon la revendication 2, dans lequel la pellicule de platine est traitée thermiquement pendant au moins 5 heures.

4. Procédé selon la revendication 3, dans lequel la pellicule de platine est traitée thermiquement pendant environ 20 heures.

5. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications 2 à 4, comportant l'opération ultérieure, après le traitement thermique, de la gravure de la pellicule de platine au laser pour former un plus grand espace décrit par celle-ci.

6. Procédé selon la revendication 5, comportant l'opération ultérieure, après la gravure au laser, d'un nouveau traitement thermique de la pellicule de platine gravée à une température de 700°C à 1200°C pendant au moins 1 heure.

7. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel l'atmosphère gazeuse est de l'oxygène pur.

8. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6, dans lequel l'atmosphère gazeuse est constituée d'au moins 20 % en volume d'oxygène, le reste du gaz étant inerte vis-à-vis du platine.

9. Procédé selon la revendication 8, dans lequel l'atmosphère gazeuse est constituée d'au moins 50 % en volume d'oxygène, le reste du gaz étant inerte vis-à-vis du platine.

10. Procédé selon la revendication 8, dans lequel le reste du gaz est surtout composé d'azote.

11. Procédé selon la revendication 10, dans lequel l'atmosphère gazeuse est de l'air.

12. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel la cible de pulvérisation utilisée du platine pur à 99,99 %.

13. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel la pression de l'atmosphère gazeuse est de $1,33 \times 10^{-6}$ à $1,33 \times 10^{-5}$ bars (10^{-3} torrs à 10^{-2} torrs).

14. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 12, dans lequel la pression de l'atmosphère gazeuse est de $1,33 \times 10^{-5}$ à $1,33 \times 10^{-4}$ bars (10^{-2} torrs à 10^{-1} torrs).

15. Procédé selon la revendication 13, dans lequel la pression est de $5,32$ à $7,98 \times 10^{-6}$ bars (4×10^{-3} torrs à 6×10^{-3} torrs).

16. Procédé selon la revendication 13, dans lequel la pression est de $7,98$ à $11,97 \times 10^{-6}$ bars (6×10^{-3} torrs à 10^{-3} torrs).

17. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le magnétron utilisé est un magnétron plan.

18. Procédé selon la revendication 17, dans lequel le trajet fermé est globalement circulaire.

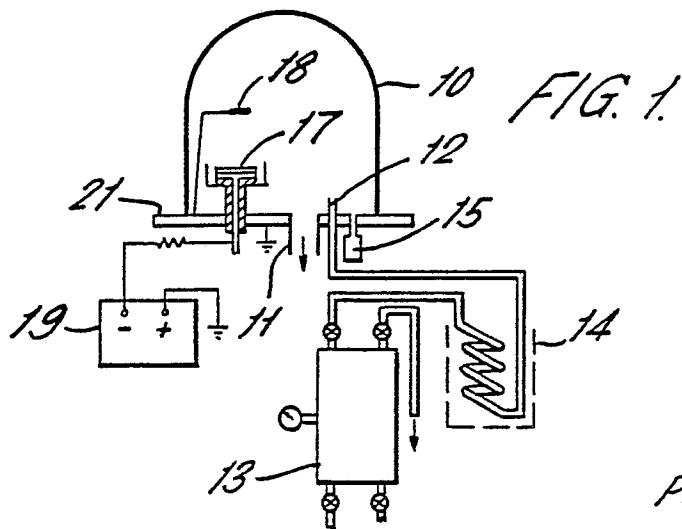


FIG. 2.

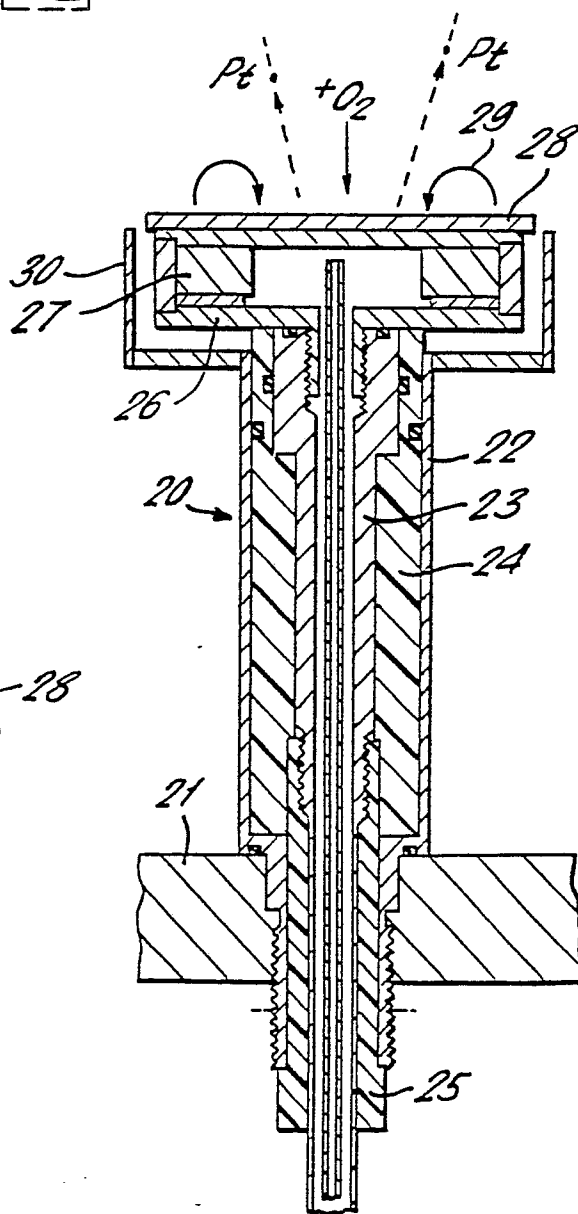


FIG. 3.

